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# Ferris State University professor on leave after bizarre video about grades

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BIG RAPIDS, Mich. — A Michigan university professor has been placed on leave after he told students in a profanity laced video that he randomly assigns grades before the first day of class.

“I don’t even want to know your name,” said Barry Mehler of Ferris State University in Big Rapids. “I just look at the number and assign a grade. That is how predestination works. ... Take your complaints to God. He ordained this system, not me.”

In the 14-minute video, Mehler, 74, called students “vectors of disease” and said they didn't need to attend class in person.

“I will not take questions in class because I'm wearing this ... helmet in order to stay alive,” he said, a reference to an astronaut-style helmet with air filters displayed earlier in the video.

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Ferris State said Mehler has been placed on leave while his conduct is investigated. The professor has not responded to an email seeking comment.

“I was shocked and appalled by this video. It is profane, offensive and disturbing and in no way reflects our university or its values,” President David Eisler said Thursday.

Mehler's LinkedIn page says he teaches the history of science and the “interface between science and racism.”

He told students in the video “there’s absolutely nothing you can do” about grades but later said “everything you need to earn an A” is available on a class website.

“My grading system is based on the Calvinist doctrine of predestination,” he said. “I figure if it was good enough for America, it’s good enough for me. The Indians didn’t lose because they failed. They tried everything and nothing worked. ... You’re all predestined to lose just like the Indians.”

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